

## Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, GR

SUBJECT: USS SANCTUARY - HOMEPORING

1. ASSOCIATED PRESS TICKER CARRIED THE FOLLOWING STORY  
YESTERDAY CONCERNING THE DECOMMISSIONING OF USS SANCTUARY.

QUOTE: THE NAVY'S FIRST SEAGOING WOMEN SAILORS  
APPARENTLY WILL BE BEACHED NEXT YEAR BECAUSE THE NAVY  
PLANS TO TAKE THE HOSPITAL SHIP SANCTUARY OUT OF  
COMMISSION, PROBABLY BY SPRING.

OFFICIALS SAY THERE IS NO OTHER ACTIVE NAVY SHIP TO WHICH  
WOMEN CAN BE ASSIGNED UNDER THE LAW.

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE NAVY PLANS TO RETIRE THE SANCTUARY,  
THE PENTAGON SAID THE MOVE STEMS FROM "BUDGETARY REASONS."  
THE MOVE ALSO RAISES THE QUESTION WHETHER THE NAVY INTENDS  
TO CARRY OUT ITS PLAN TO STATION AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER IN  
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GREECE.

NAVY OFFICIALS STRESSED THEY ARE FAR FROM DISAPPOINTED WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN WHO HAVE SERVED ON THE CREW OF THE HOSPITAL SHIP SINCE THE POLOT PROGRAM WAS STARTED TWO YEARS AGO.

THEY SAID NO MAJOR PROBLEMS DEVELOPED WHILE AS MANY AS 69 WOMEN OFFICERS AND ENLISTED PERSONNEL LIVED AND WORKED AMONG MORE THAN 400 MALES ABOARD THE SHIP.

AT ONE POINT LAST YEAR, NAVY SOURCES SAID THERE HAD BEEN SEVERAL SHIPBOARD ROMANCES AND ONE POSSIBLE WEDDING WAS BUDDING BETWEEN A RADIO WOMAN AND A MACHINIST'S MATE.

ALSO, A YOUNG WOMAN HAD LEARNED SHE WAS PREGNANT AND WAS TRANSFERRED ASHORE AFTER ONLY A MONTH ABOARD. THE NAVY SAID AT THE TIME THAT THE UNMARRIED WOMAN BECAME PREGNANT BEFORE JOINING THE CREW.

A TOTAL OF 19 OFFICERS AND 97 ENLISTED WOMEN HAVE SERVED SINCE 1972 ABOARD THE SANCTUARY, NOW BASED AT MAYPORT, FLA.

THE SENIOR WOMAN OFFICER NOW ASSIGNED TO THE SANCTUARY, LT. SUSAN CANFIELD, HAS BEEN CHOSEN FOR PROMOTION TO LIEUTENANT COMMANDER AND WILL TEACH NAVIGATION AT THE U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY, WHERE WOMEN STILL ARE EXCLUDED AS MIDSHIPMEN.

THE OTHER NAVY WOMEN NOW SERVING WITH THE HOSPITAL SHIP ALSO WILL BE SHIFTED TO SHORE BILLETS.

ALTHOUGH OFFICIALS DECLINED TO DISCUSS OTHER IMPLICATIONS OF THE SANCTUARY'S RETIREMENT, THE MOVE RAISES A QUESTION WHETHER THE UNITED STATES MAY CHANGE ITS MIND ABOUT BASING AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER IN GREECE.

IT IS KNOWN THAT THE SANCTUARY WAS TO HAVE BEEN SENT TO GREECE TO PROVIDE MEDICAL SERVICES FOR THOUSANDS OF CARRIER CREWMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES WHO WOULD BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXPECTED TO LIVE THERE UNDER THE NAVY'S "HOMEPORING" PROGRAM.

THE WOMAN-AT-SEA PROGRAM WAS ONE OF A SERIES OF INNOVATIONS PUT INTO EFFECT BY ADM. ELMO R. ZUMWALT WHEN HE WAS CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS.

ADM. JAMES L. HOLLOWAY, WHO SUCCEEDED ZUMWALT LAST SUMMER,

HAS STARTED EASING BACK ON SOME OF THE INNOVATIONS.

BUT OFFICIALS SAY HOLLOWAY INTENDS TO PUSH AHEAD WITH EFFORTS TO ATTRACT MORE WOMEN TO NAVAL SERVICE.

WOMEN ARE BEING ACCEPTED IN NAVAL AVIATION AND THE SEABEES, AMONG OTHER SPECIALTIES THAT ONCE WERE ALL MALE, WOMEN

ALSO ARE BEING INVITED INTO THE NAVAL R.O.T.C. UNQUOTE.

2. THE DEPARTMENT HAS PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE TO DEFENSE FOR THEIR USE IN RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS WHICH MAY ARISE FROM THE SANCTUARY STORY:

QUOTE: THE SANCTUARY IS BEING DECOMMISSIONED FOR BUDGETARY REASONS AND FUNDS FOR ITS UP KEEP WILL BE DEVOTED TO HIGHER PRIORITY SUBJECTS. IF PRESSED ON RELEVANCE OF THIS ACTION TO PHASE II HOMEPORTING ANSWER SHOULD BE: NONE. AS HAS BEEN NOTED BEFORE TO THE CONGRESS PHASE II HOMEPORTING IS A MATTER ON WHICH NO FINAL DECISION HAS BEEN MADE. UNQUOTE.

3. WE DO NOT WISH TO TAKE ANY INITIATIVE WITH GOG AT THIS TIME. RECOMMEND EMBASSY DRAW ON PARA 2 ABOVE TO RESPOND TO ANY QUERY RECEIVED FROM THE PRESS AND REFER IMMEDIATELY TO THE DEPARTMENT ANY OFFICIAL QUERY RECEIVED FROM GOG ON THIS MATTER. KISSINGER

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## Message Attributes

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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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